

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT
FOR THE WESTERN DISTRICT OF PENNSYLVANIA

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

v.

HORACIO MIRANDA-MEJIA

Magistrate No. 21-1363

AFFIDAVIT FOR CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, Matthew Patcher, being duly sworn, depose and state:

INTRODUCTION

1. I am a Special Agent (SA) with the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI), assigned to the Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania office. I have been employed as a Special Agent for the FBI since October 2012. As part of my duties, I investigate violations of federal law, including the online exploitation of children, including violations pertaining to the illegal possession, receipt, transmission, and production of material depicting the sexual exploitation of minors, and the interstate travel by adults for the purpose of engaging in unlawful sexual acts with children. I have gained expertise in the conduct of such investigations through training in the area of child pornography and child exploitation investigations in seminars, classes, and everyday work related to conducting these types of investigations, and I have had the opportunity to observe and review numerous examples of child pornography in a variety of media, including computer media. By virtue of my FBI employment, I perform and have performed a variety of investigative tasks, including the execution of federal search warrants and seizures, and the identification and collection of computer-related evidence. I have personally participated in the execution of numerous federal arrest warrants, search warrants involving the search and seizure of computer equipment in cases involving violations of Title 18, United States Code, Sections 2250, 2251(a),

2252(a), 2422(a) and (b), and 2423—offenses involving the sexual exploitation of children, child pornography, and enticement.

2. I know that Title 18, United States Code, Section 2422(b) makes it a crime to use a facility and means of interstate commerce, such as the Internet and the telephone, to attempt to knowingly persuade, induce, and entice an individual who had not attained the age of 18 years to engage in sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a criminal offense.

3. I am aware that Pennsylvania prohibits a person from intentionally contacting a minor, including a law enforcement officer acting in an undercover capacity and assuming the identity of a minor, for the purpose of engaging in the activity of any one or more of the activities prohibited in Chapter 31 of Pennsylvania's crime code, 18 Pa. C.S. § 6318(a)(1), and that Chapter 31 of Pennsylvania's Criminal Code, Section 3122.1(b) prohibits a person from engaging in sexual intercourse with an individual under the age of 16 years and that person is 11 or more years older than the individual and the person and the individual are not married to each other, and 3123(a)(7) prohibits a person from engaging in deviate sexual intercourse with an individual who is less than 16 years of age and the person is four or more years older than the individual and the individual and the person are not married to each other.

4. This affidavit is being submitted in support of a criminal complaint against defendant, HORACIO MIRANDA-MEJIA, hereinafter referred to as MIRANDA-MEJIA, charging him with a violation of 18 U.S.C. 2422(b).

5. I am familiar with the facts and circumstances set forth in this affidavit as a result of my participation with the Western Pennsylvania Violent Crimes Against Children Task Force and in this investigation, information received from other criminal investigators, and my review of chats/text messages between the Undercover Agent (herein after "undercover" or "UC") and

MIRANDA-MEJIA. Because this affidavit is being submitted for the limited purpose of establishing probable cause in support of a criminal complaint, I have not set forth each and every fact learned during the course of this investigation.

6. In summary, the following affidavit sets forth facts establishing probable cause that MIRANDA-MEJIA used a facility of interstate commerce, the Internet and a cellular telephone network, to attempt to knowingly persuade, induce, entice, and coerce an individual who had not attained the age of 18 years to engage in unlawful sexual activity. MIRANDA-MEJIA, born in February 1995, utilized the usernames: “Mejia Mejia” and telephone number 412-867-9648 on a specific Internet application (hereinafter “application”). On or about June 22, 2021, MIRANDA-MEJIA initiated contact with the undercover (UC), who had assumed the identity of a twelve-year-old female, via messaging feature on the application. Based on my training and experience and the facts set forth in this affidavit, there is probable cause to believe that a violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2422(b) has been committed by MIRANDA-MEJIA.

PROBABLE CAUSE

7. Between the dates of June 22, 2021 and June 25, 2021, the undercover agent created an account on an Internet-based application which is a geosocial networking and online messaging application. It runs on iOS and Android devices, and is available for download from the Apple App Store and Google Play. Users can find users based on their geo-location or join groups and chat in groups on the picture of another social media user, and the app will display the username and/or phone number of the user and a photo if one was uploaded by the user.

8. In this investigation, the undercover assumed the identity of a twelve-year-old female located in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. An individual with the social media username “Mejia Mejia” and telephone number 412-867-9648 (hereafter Mejia) contacted the undercover via the

app and engaged the undercover in conversation beginning on or about June 22, 2021. Between the dates of June 22, 2021 and June 25, 2021, Mejia contacted the undercover several times via the application.

9. Mejia's picture was of a leg wearing green Nike shoes; however, Mejia changed his profile picture to a black and white of a Hispanic male with dark hair. Mejia's phone number became visible on the application as 412-867-9648. Your Affiant utilized public source law enforcement databases and believed the phone number was utilized by HORACIO MIRANDA-MEJIA. MIRANDA-MEJIA had a previous interaction with the Department of Homeland Security. DHS was able to provide a photograph of MIRANDA-MEJIA. The photo provided by DHS is visually similar to the black and white photo on the Mejia profile.

10. On June 22, 2021 at approximately 8:12 PM, MIRANDA-MEJIA contacted the undercover on the application and said "Hi" to which the undercover replies "Hi". There is no substantive conversation until on or about June 24, 2021. MIRANDA-MEJIA continued to engage the undercover:

06/23/2021 10:43 AM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – Hi, how are you babe

06/23/2021 11:07 AM – UC – I'm ok wbu

UC – Where do u live?

06/23/2021 3:56 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA - Pittsburgh

MIRANDA-MEJIA – And you

06/24/2021 9:00 AM – UC – I'm from Pittsburgh

06/24/2021 10:19 AM MIRANDA-MEJIA – So how old are you, are your married?

06/24/2021 10:21 AM – UC – Haha I wish. No I'm going into 8th grade and ill be 13 next month. How old are you?

06/24/2021 10:24 AM – MIRANDA-MEJIA - 13 years old are you

MIRANDA-MEJIA – I'm 23

MIRAND-MEJIA – do you have a boyfriend

MIRANDA-MEJIA – what do you do

The conversation continues and MIRANDA-MEJIA asks the undercover for a picture. The undercover sends a known photograph of a female approximately 11-13 years old. MIRANDA-MEJIA continued to converse and multiple times in the conversation complimented to undercover's purported appearance:

06/24/2021 12:31 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – you look pretty

06/24/2021 1:17 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – you know friend you are a very pretty you are a beautiful girl

MIRANDA-MEJIA told the undercover he did not have a girlfriend and asked the undercover if she would like a boyfriend:

06/24/2021 1:28 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – yes I would like to have a girlfriend but now I don't have

MIRANDA-MEJIA – and you would not like to have a boyfriend

MIRNADA-MEJIA – And your boyfriend, your first boyfriend you had, you had sex with him

06/24/2021 1:34 PM - UC – <surprised face emoji>

UC – what

06/24/2021 1:35 PM MIRANDA-MEJIA - <heart eyes emoji>

MIRANDA-MEJIA – no nothing do not worry because you told me

you had that you only had a boyfriend

MIRANDA-MEJIA lets see when we meet

MIRANDA-MEJIA continued to compliment to undercover and asked for a picture of her entire body. MIRANDA-MEJIA again steered the conversation to sex.

06/24/2021 2:14 PM MIRANDA-MEJIA – Hey, can I ask you a question, I hope you don't get made ok

06/24/2021 2:39 PM -UC- yes go ahead n ask me a question

06/24/2021 2:24 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – have you had sex

MIRANDA-MEJIA – that's how i made love

MIRANDA-MEJIA - <kissing face emoji>

06/24/2021 2:44 PM – UC- No I haven't had sex b4. Have u?

06/24/2021 2:47 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – you are a virgin

MIRANDA-MEJIA – then we can see each other

The two converse more with MIRANDA-MEJIA again asking to see the purported minor.

06/24/2021 3:05 PM MIRNADA-MEJIA – And you one day want to have sex

06/24/2021 3:05 PM UC – I don't know how or what to do

UC – I dont want you to think bad of me

06/24/2021 3:07 PM MIRNADA-MEJIA – when your mom goes to work we can meet

MIRANDA-MEJIA asks when the purported minor's parents are at work.

06/24/2021 3:10 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA - What time does your mom leave for work and what time does she come back

MIRANDA-MEJIA – do you want to have sex

06/24/2021 3:10 PM UC- She works 12 hour shifts at the hospital

06/24/2021 3:11 PM MIRANDA-MEJIA - and right now your mom is at your house

MIRANDA-MEJIA – you know how sex is done

06/24/2021 3:12 PM – UC – I have an idea but I have nvr done anything. My friends all say they did but I don't know

06/24/2021 3:13 PM MIRANDA-MEJIA – tell me how

MIRANDA-MEJIA – and you plan to do it

06/24/2021 3:13 PM – UC – what?

UC – u talked about it not me

UC – r u a cop?

06/24/2021 3:14 PM MIRANDA-MEJIA – yes but since

06/24/2021 3:14 PM UC – I don't want to get in trouble

06/24/2021 3:14 PM UC – she is too young to have sex

06/24/2021 3:14 PM UC – who

06/24/2021 3:15 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – you are not going to get in trouble, neither you nor me

06/24/2021 3:15 PM – UC – ok

06/24/2021 3:15 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – or do you want to have sex

06/24/2021 3:16 PM – UC – tomorrow?

06/24/2021 3:17 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA- <kissing face emoji>

06/24/2021 3:18 PM – MIRANDA-MEJIA – seriously

06/24/2021 3:18 PM – UC – I guess so <smiley emoji>

MIRANDA-MEJIA asked if the purported minor's parents would be around and for an

address where the minor lived. MIRANDA-MEJIA told the purported minor he wanted to see her butt naked and sex hurts a little. MIRANDA-MEJIA told the girl not to tell anyone about their planned meeting. MIRANDA-MEJIA said he would not get the minor pregnant, and that he wanted to suck her pussy. On or about June 25, 2021, MIRANDA-MEJIA reached out the purported minor with a kissing face emoji. The undercover told MIRANDA-MEJIA where she purportedly lived, and MIRANDA-MEJIA discussed sucking the minor's pussy again. The undercover told MIRANDA-MEJIA that he (MIRANDA-MEJIA) was beginning to scare her (the undercover) and the undercover tried to call off the meeting several times but MIRANDA-MEJIA persisted and assured the undercover that he would not harm her.

On June 25, 2021 MIRANDA-MEJIA was observed by law enforcement as he arrived at the apartment complex where the purported minor lived. MIRANDA-MEJIA was taken into custody at that time.

CONCLUSION

24. Considering all of the foregoing, there is probable cause to believe that, from June 22, 2021 until on or about June 25, 2021, in the Western District of Pennsylvania, the defendant, HORACIO MIRANDA-MEJIA, did use a facility and means of interstate commerce, the Internet and a cellular telephone network, to attempt to knowingly persuade, induce, entice or coerce an individual who had not attained the age of 18 years to engage in sexual activity for which any person can be charged with a criminal offense, in violation of 18 U.S.C. § 2422.

25. The above information is true and correct to the best of my knowledge, information, and belief.

/s/ Matthew Patcher
MATTHEW PATCHER
Special Agent
Federal Bureau of Investigation

Sworn to before me telephonically
pursuant to Fed. R. Crim. P. 4.1(b)(2)(A),
this 25th day of June, 2021.

HONORABLE CYNTHIA REED EDDY
Chief United States Magistrate Judge